

EMANCIPATION DAY

COMMEMORATIVE ACTIVITIES

MONDAY, APRIL 12TH

6:00–9:00 p.m.

Community Forum

15th Street Presbyterian Church

- Slavery and the role of the church
- Leaders and advocates for emancipation

TUESDAY, APRIL 13TH

11:30 a.m. *Mayor's Press Conference*

Thurgood Marshall Center Trust

for Service and Heritage

1816 12th Street, N.W.

6:00–9:00 p.m.

UDC Emancipation Lecture Series

University of the District of

Columbia, Auditorium

4200 Connecticut Ave., N.W.

(Building 46)

- Compensated Emancipation – April 16, 1862
- The Abolition movement in DC
- The Impact of the Snow Riot of 1835 and Slavery in DC
- The Impact of the Pearl Affairs and Riot of 1848 and Slavery in DC
- The Impact of the 1850 Compromise and Slavery in DC

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14TH

7:00 p.m. *UDC Emancipation Lecture Series*
CONTINUES...

THURSDAY, APRIL 15TH

6:00–9:00 p.m.

VIP Reception

City Museum

801 K Street N.W.

- Honoring:

Dr. Paul Cook

Loretta Carter Hanes

C.R. Gibbs

- Entertainment:

Ballou High School Jazz Ensemble

African Heritage Dancers

& Drummers

FRIDAY, APRIL 16TH

11:00 a.m. *Parade*

Pennsylvania Avenue, between 4th

& 14th Streets, N.W.

2:00 p.m. *Program*

Freedom Plaza, Pennsylvania Avenue,

13th & 14th Streets, N.W.

• Performances

- Poets

- Choirs

- Dancers

- Ensembles

5:30 p.m. *Concert featuring nationally known*
recording artist, Freedom Plaza

8:15 p.m. *Fireworks*

Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.

near Freedom Plaza

SATURDAY, APRIL 17TH

7:30 a.m. *Emancipation Day Golf Tournament*
Langston Golf Course
2600 Benning Road, N.E.

10:00 a.m. *Wreath Laying Ceremony*
Lincoln Park, East Capital Street
between 11th and 13th Streets, N.E.

SUNDAY, APRIL 18TH

11:00 a.m. *Ecumenical Worship Service*
Simpson-Hamlin United Methodist
Church, 4501 16th Street, N.W.
Rev Douglass B. Sands, Pastor



"WITH FREEDOM COMES RESPONSIBILITY."

For more information, please call
202-727-6306

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"WITH FREEDOM COMES RESPONSIBILITY."

Celebration
April 12th-18th

Anthony A. Williams, Mayor

MAYOR'S MESSAGE



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COMPENSATED EMANCIPATION WEEK 142nd ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

As Mayor of the District of Columbia, I am pleased to join with the citizens of the District of Columbia to celebrate the 142nd anniversary of compensated emancipation. Emancipation came to the District of Columbia on April 16, 1862 through an act of Congress entitled "For the release of certain persons held to service or labor in the District of Columbia," which was signed by President Abraham Lincoln. This document recognized enslaved persons in the District as the first freed, nine months before President Lincoln issued his famous Emancipation Proclamation.

Emancipation celebrations have a long and glorious history in the District of Columbia. During the week of April 12-16, 2004, we continue the legacy and traditions of these celebrations. This is a historical occasion to celebrate the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia and to renew our commitment in the struggle for full and complete home rule and voting rights in the District of Columbia.

I'd like to acknowledge and thank Councilmember Vincent Orange who introduced the legislation to host the commemorative parade to celebrate compensated emancipation in the District of Columbia. I invite you all to enjoy the activities throughout the week.

Sincerely,

Anthony A. Williams
Mayor
District of Columbia

PROCLAMATION DC EMANCIPATION DAY APRIL 16, 2004

WHEREAS, on April 16, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln signed into law the Compensated Emancipation Act that freed all enslaved persons in the District of Columbia, and effectively abolished slavery in the nation's capital; and

WHEREAS, the Compensated Emancipation Act of April 16, 1862 freed 3,100 formerly enslaved persons in the District of Columbia through which Congress established a commission to appraise the value of such persons and appropriated more than one million dollars to compensate former slave owners for freeing those held captive in slavery; and

WHEREAS, enslaved persons in the District of Columbia were the first freed as a result of the Compensated Emancipation Act of April 16, 1862 which was enacted into law nine months before President Lincoln issued his famous Emancipation Proclamation, freeing enslaved persons in the rebellious Confederate States; and, in recognition of the Compensated Emancipation Act, African-Americans have traditionally held Emancipation Day celebrations as annual events to celebrate the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia; and

WHEREAS, this Emancipation Commemorative Celebration marks the 142nd anniversary of the Compensated Emancipation Act in the District of Columbia; and, through this celebration the District of Columbia will continue the tradition of abolitionists such as Frederick Douglass who, at the twenty-first celebration of emancipation in the District of Columbia on April 16, 1883, called attention to the continued struggle for civil rights; and, today, in the spirit of Frederick Douglass, we make that clarion call in our struggle for full and complete home rule for the residents of the District of Columbia; and

WHEREAS, the District of Columbia Emancipation Commemoration Commission has planned a series of activities, programs, forums, and events, which will culminate with the parade and fireworks to re-establish the glorious tradition of hosting emancipation celebrations in the nation's capital to recognize residents of the District of Columbia as the first freed in the struggle for freedom, justice, and equality.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, THE MAYOR OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, do hereby proclaim April 16, 2004 as DC EMANCIPATION DAY in Washington, D.C., and call upon all the residents of this great city to join with me in celebrating the history of emancipation in the District of Columbia.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

- April 16, 1862 marks the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia with the Compensated Emancipation Act
- July 12, 1862, the Supplemental Compensated Emancipation Act was signed into law
- Over 3,000 enslaved persons in the District of Columbia were freed nine months before Lincoln issued his famous Emancipation Proclamation
- The District of Columbia is the only jurisdiction in the United States to have compensated slave owners for freeing enslaved persons
- A commission was appointed to appraise the value of each slave
- An average of \$300 was paid to slaveholders, as compensation for freeing enslaved persons
- Claims for compensation were required to be presented in ninety days from the passage of the Compensated Emancipation Act
- Nearly \$1 million in federal payments were made for the freedom of enslaved persons
- The African-American community celebrated Emancipation Day on April 19, 1866 as represented on a wood engraving sketch by F. Dielman
- On April 16, 1883, Frederick Douglass spoke at the Emancipation Day celebration
- The African-American community has a long history of Emancipation Day celebrations with parades and festivals
- From 1862 to the early 1900s, the Emancipation Day celebration, it was more important to the African-American community than Fourth of July, Christmas, and New Year's festivities

ABOLITION IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

- Jesse Torrey's 1815 *Portraiture of Domestic Slavery* passing in front of the Capitol
- Abolitionists challenge Congress to abolish slavery in the District under the constitutional authority of *exclusive jurisdiction* over the District
- Washington Abolition Society organized, 1827
- Antislavery newspaper, *The Genius of Universal Emancipation*, 1831
- Abolitionists flood Congress with petitions to end slavery and slave trade in the District
- Congress enacted *gag rule* in 1836 to set aside petitions to end slavery and slave trade in the District without debate
- John Quincy Adams, former President and Representative from Massachusetts fought against the *gag rule*
- A few members of the House of Representatives established an abolitionist lobby
- Abolitionists and the Underground Railroad in the District of Columbia
- Anthony Bowen, a free African-American and conductor in the Underground Railroad in the District of Columbia
- Slave revolts and Nat Turner's Insurrection of 1831
- Snow Riot of 1835
- The Pearl Affair and Riot of 1848
- The Compromise of 1850
- Compensated Emancipation Act, April 16, 1862